CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 23 July 1970, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. C. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)

(Previous verbatim records in this series appeared under the symbols ENDC/PV.1-ENDC/PV.430).

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	Mr. L.F. PALMEIRA LAMPREIA
Bulgaria:	Mr. T. PETROV
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Japan:	Mr. H. TANAKA
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1. The CHAIRMAN (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I declare open the 481st plenary meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. Mr. CASTANEDA (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): It is my intention on this occasion to make some comments on chemical and bacteriological weapons. In previous statements, both here and in the General Assembly, the delegation of Mexico has expressed its views on those weapons of mass destruction. However, certain developments have taken place recently to which we should now like to refer. It goes without saying that our anxiety is increased by the dangerous slowness of the process of negotiation, despite the obvious need to reach an agreement on this subject and the urgent request addressed to us by the General Assembly.

3. We now have new and better evidence on which to establish our positions. Many important suggestions have been made by various delegations during our discussions; and various institutions whose repute and authority cannot be questioned have produced well-documented and instructive studies. We ourselves continue to regard the report prepared by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons (A/7575/Rev.1) as the essential background against which to order our ideas on this question. We also have the report of the World Health Organization on the general health aspects of chemical and biological agents[1/], which has confirmed the conclusions of the group of experts convened by the Secretary-General. Thirdly, we have the highly-authoritative and conscientious studies published by the Stockholm International Institute for Peace and Conflict Research (SIPRI), which are especially valuable and useful in regard to the methods of verification and control that might be used for guaranteeing compliance with obligations.

4. This valuable material has consolidated and strengthened some of our original judgements, and has given us a new frame for reflection. An initial conclusion would be that prohibition of the use of such weapons is urgent and hence calls for a solution within a very short time. In the debates which took place last spring in the Committee on Disarmament, the view was expressed that in certain respects this subject is perhaps the most important on our agenda. It might rightly be maintained that such weapons constitute an even greater danger than nuclear weapons. These, because

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1/ Health Aspects of Chemical and Biological Weapons: Report of a WHO Group of Consultants, Geneva, 1970.

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of their very high cost, are available to only a very few great Powers, whereas chemical and biological weapons can be manufactured by a relatively large number of medium-sized or even small countries. They are, in a sense, the mass-destruction weapons of the poor. It is not that we think -- far from it -- that the great Powers, because they are great Powers, are more cautious and conduct their international relations with a greater sense of responsibility than the small Powers. We do believe, however, that any proliferation of these weapons is in itself a factor that undermines international relations and endangers peace. In any event there appears to be a broad consensus that the discussion is now ripe enough to let us reasonably expect a rapid solution.

5. The recent resolutions of the General Assembly constitute an important step forward. It will be recalled that last year, here in Geneva, extensive debates took place on the precise value and meaning of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925 (A/7575/Rev.1, annex VI). The twelve non-aligned countries upheld the view that the use of chemical and biological weapons was formally prohibited and that the prohibition had for some time been an integral part of the generally-recognized rules of international law. None the less, we were aware also that a declaration by the General Assembly, as a highly representative body of the international community, concerning the scope and meaning of the prohibition contained in the 1925 Protocol would have great political and legal significance and would reinforce our judgement.

6. Subsequent developments confirmed that opinion. The discussions in the General Assembly were highly constructive and enlightening. Its resulting resolution (2603 A (XXIV), CCD/275) condemned, and declared contrary to international law, the use of any chemical or biological agents of warfare and of substances, living organisms or infective material derived from either category.

7. Permit me to recall the statement made at the beginning of the spring session by the head of the Mexican delegation, Mr. García Robles, in commenting on that all-important resolution of the General Assembly:

> "My delegation ventures to hope that the Committee may take that solemn declaration as a starting-point for its work in this field, since to do otherwise would imply disregard of what the General Assembly has rightly called 'the generally recognized rules of international law' and would hence be a deplorable step backwards." (CCD/PV.449, para. 78)

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8. We are gratified at the announcement made by the representative of Japan, Mr. Tanaka, that his country had ratified the Geneva Protocol of 1925 without attaching any reservation (CCD/PV.471, para 30). We hope to hear similar encouraging announcements from countries that have not yet signed the Protocol or have formulated reservations that limit it excessively. It is satisfactory also to learn that other countries have been taking the necessary measures to make an announcement similar to that which the Minister of External Relations of Brazil made a few days ago (CCD/PV.477, para. 15). We hope that in the very near future the Geneva Protocol will become an instrument with universal adherence.

9. The questions relating to the signature or ratification of the Protocol are one aspect of the problem before us. The other, of course, consists of the draft conventions submitted for our consideration and discussion by the delegations of the United Kingdom (ENDC/255/Rev.1) and of nine socialist countries (A/7655). The object of those two drafts is to supplement the prohibition contained in the Geneva Protocol by adopting provisions designed to prevent not only the use in war but also the production, acquisition and stockpiling of these weapons, and to ensure the destruction of existing stockpiles. The two drafts, of course, differ in the scope of their prohibition, the draft of the nine socialist States encompassing both chemical and bacteriological weapons, the United Kingdom draft only the latter.

10. Naturally, considerable efforts have since been made to improve both those drafts. It is very encouraging that the partisans of each draft have noted the criticisms of other States and attempted to strengthen its weak or doubtful points. Thus the United Kingdom delegation last year submitted a new article taken mutatis mutandis from the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*) and including in the operative part an obligation to pursue negotiations concerning weapons not so far covered. It likewise amended article I to dispel any fear that the future treaty might affect obligations assumed earlier by parties in accordance with the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

11. The same can be said of the steps taken by the United States delegation. Mr. Leonard's recent statement (CCD/PV.474, paras. 16 et seq.) that his country's Government regarded toxins as an integral part of the prohibitions laid down in the treaty are definitely encouraging. That addition considerably increases the value of the United Kingdom draft.

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12. On the other side, the delegations of Poland, Hungary and Mongolia have proposed (CCD/285 and Corr.1) amendments to the draft treaty of the nine socialist countries designed to increase United Nations participation in the verification machinery and generally to strengthen this.

13. In view of all those new facts we feel it necessary to explain our position in accordance with the criterion expressed in this Committee by the head of my delegation, Mr. García Robles: that, while our delegation prefers a more general approach, it "is prepared to do all it can to achieve a solution satisfactory to all." (CCD/PV.449, para. 80)

14. We are very sensitive to the explanations given by those delegations which favour separate treatment for chemical and for biological weapons. In particular, as the United States delegation has pointed out, the very difficult verification procedures constitute the main stumbling-block. Similarly, the reasons invoked for giving our deliberations what has been called a "practical approach" are another factor that deserves to be carefully weighed.

15. We still believe that the undoubted difficulties of tackling both problems simultaneously are not entirely insurmountable. Perhaps those who propose that the subject should be divided start from the assumption that a clear and precise distinction can be drawn between chemical and biological weapons. In this Committee the more complex characteristics of the former have been insistently urged as the supreme argument for dissociating the two problems. Nevertheless, we are still in favour of the more comprehensive approach: the joint consideration of a problem which to our mind can hardly be divided. In point of fact we share the view of those delegations which have pointed out that the essential feature of both types of weapons is mass destruction. Because of their effects and their scope, both follow a similar line affecting the normal course of nature and life; both are capable of destroying the ecological environment in which we live.

16. We still doubt the soundness of separating these two weapons, since there is ample evidence that various types of agents are classed by some experts as biological and by others, equally competent and qualified, as chemical. Furthermore, the dividing line between the two is so delicate and fine that it sometimes becomes imperceptible. Moreover, new methods of chemical and biological warfare are constantly being discovered. As the Secretary-General's report truly says --

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"All biological processes depend upon chemical or physico-chemical reactions, and what may be regarded today as a biological agent could, tomorrow, as knowledge advances, be treated as chemical."
(A/7575/Rev.1, para. 19)

17. Thus we do not believe that the difference in nature between the two kinds of weapons is a valid reason for dealing with them separately. Moreover, the doubt occurs to us that to divide the problem may, despite the more or less vague compromise formulas that have been proposed, have the untoward effect of indefinitely postponing the preparation of a draft on chemical weapons. Experience shows clearly that, far from clearing the road to a second agreement, the crystallization of positions and the consolidation of vested interests -- as nearly always happens -- are more likely to block it. Consequently we believe that the unquestionable minor disadvantages of tackling these two problems together are less than the enormous dangers of tackling them separately.

18. I should now like to make a few brief remarks on the problem of verification and control. Our initial impression that manufacture of the kind of weapons we have in mind was so simple that even a garage or a kitchen could be used as a laboratory has to some extent been dispelled. On that point the World Health Organization's study has been especially enlightening. But the study itself suggests that in the last analysis the question is only one of nuance or, at most, of degree. The undeniable fact is that production of those weapons is relatively simple and inexpensive. Essentially, therefore, it is practically impossible to conceive of a direct control system based on international means and instruments.

19. Recognition of that truth, however, in no way means acceptance of the opposite view that chemical weapons cannot therefore be prohibited by international agreement. Pushed to the extreme, that reasoning could be applied to all disarmament measures, since control over any of them would be far from easy. In actual fact, any industrial installation capable of contributing to the manufacture of any kind of weapons could be built and concealed inside a mountain -- except possibly a gaseous diffusion plant. The fact that such installations cannot be controlled through visual observation is certainly not a reason for our resigning ourselves to never reaching an agreement on disarmament.

20. What happens is that, as the Swedish working paper (CCD/287) points out and the Swedish representative, Mrs. Myrdal, repeated on 14 July, a single verification method is rarely enough and a combination of mutually-reinforcing methods often has to be used

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For chemical and biological weapons a system of verification by challenge would be particularly appropriate -- that is, in the words of the Swedish representative --

> "... voluntary decision by a party under suspicion of having violated a certain engagement to free itself through the supply of relevant information, not excluding invitation to inspection by an outside party or organ."
> (CCD/PV.478, para. 51)

21. We are convinced that a combination of national and international methods culminating in action by the Security Council would provide reasonable guarantees -- not absolute certainty, since that is impossible, but reasonable guarantees -- that the treaty would not be violated. Control over a disarmament agreement is an equation containing three terms: first, reasonable measures of surveillance; second, tolerable risks; and third, a modicum of confidence in the other party's good faith and in its will to comply with its obligations. That confidence does not imply, of course, absolute faith that other States will be morally incapable of violating their undertakings -- certainly very few countries, if any, inspire that kind of faith. Rather it implies the belief that the price of discovery -- the loss of prestige and the other party's consequent exemption -- would be too high politically, and that the well-understood interest of each State counsels compliance with its obligations.

22. In any event, surveillance of the prohibition of biological and of chemical weapons presents similar difficulties; yet the partisans of the partial solution consider that the methods of control proposed for this purpose are sufficient. For our part, since last year we have been emphasizing the merits of the United Kingdom draft's control and surveillance provisions; we merely believe that they are equally applicable to chemical weapons.

23. The United Kingdom draft has the virtue of outlining an original and practical scheme which, though not perfect, will perhaps in the long run prove the most acceptable and adequate. It provides machinery by which a party believing that means of warfare banned by the convention have been used against it may submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations an accusation accompanied by all the available supporting evidence. The Secretary-General would be permanently empowered by the Security Council both to investigate complaints and to draw up reports on the results of his investigation. Suspicions that a State had violated other obligations, such as the prohibition of manufacture or stockpiling of biological weapons, could be referred directly to the Security Council.

24. The amendments proposed by Hungary, Mongolia and Poland to the draft treaty of the nine socialist States also strengthen the function of the Security Council. To our mind they too deserve careful consideration.

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25. These systems of complaint and accusation have the specific feature that they allow and even require some active participation by the individual as such. So far he has been confined to a clearly passive function in matters which obviously affect and particularly concern him. However, we believe that he could participate actively in denunciation of a breach of the provisions of a disarmament treaty. Moreover, the type of weapon involved makes it necessary that he should. But what is truly important is that for the first time he would become an authentic agent of disarmament and hence a genuine champion of the supreme interests of the international community. He would also fulfil a direct function in the search for peace.

26. By way of example, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland drew our attention in his statement of 14 April to the need for a precise indication in school and university textbooks of biology and chemistry that the use of any chemical or biological formula for military purposes constitutes a violation of international law and will be prosecuted in accordance with the appropriate national legislation. Mr. Winiewicz reminded us that --

> "Every individual must become aware of the danger represented by chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and must be prepared for some form of participation in the enforcement of the convention prohibiting the development and production of those inhuman means of warfare." (CCD/PV.464, para. 32)

We could not agree more fully with those observations.

27. Naturally, the minimal security guarantees that the parties will comply strictly with their obligations do not end there. The idea to which I referred a few moments ago is no more than the first step and the support on which verification must perforce rest.

28. Concerning other forms of national control, several constructive suggestions have been made and might be considered. In particular, the Yugoslav delegation has described in detail some measures designed to place under the civil administration, and particularly under the ministries of health, of all States the institutions dealing with research on chemical and bacteriological weapons and their development and manufacture (CCD/PV.456, para. 35).

29. In spite of the progress made in the negotiations, we are still very far from achieving even a moderate consensus on the preparation of a convention. A favourable circumstance appeared last spring when many delegations interpreted as a promising

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sign the statement by the representative of the United Kingdom, Lord Chalfont, that his delegation was ready to fall in with the wish of the majority in this Committee (CCD/PV.462, para. 6). Unfortunately that encouraging prospect seems recently to have somewhat faded.

30. While the possibility of an agreement encompassing both chemical and bacteriological weapons recedes, the danger grows that untimely advances in technology will permit the use of biological weapons without risk to the users. Apparently today these weapons can hardly be used because of that risk; but the situation could change radically in a short time. Thus, it is asserted, the Committee ought to agree forthwith on the prohibition of biological weapons without awaiting the conclusion of a more difficult and thus more remote agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons. That is the weightiest argument adduced in favour of a separate and immediate treaty on biological weapons. I must confess that it has not failed to impress me.

31. We believe that that danger could be prevented without the enormous difficulties, to which I have referred, which the division of this subject would entail. The use of biological weapons could be legally prevented by other means in spite of technological progress, while an agreement embracing both chemical and biological weapons is being negotiated. We believe that to be possible.

32. The President of the United States announced in his statements of 25 November 1969 and 15 February this year the resolve of his Government to renounce all offensive biological weapons and lethal toxins; at the same time he confirmed his Government's decision not to be the first to utilize lethal chemical weapons, including incapacitating chemical agents; and lastly he pledged the elimination of the existing stockpiles of bacteriological weapons (CCD/PV.449, paras. 25, 26). Mrs. Myrdal, in her last statement, mentioned other unilateral declarations by several other countries along similar or identical lines (CCD/PV.480, paras. 20 et seq.).

33. It is superfluous to say that those announcements were received and welcomed with deep gratification by the international community. I have ventured to recall these important unilateral declarations by the United States Government, not only because of their intrinsic sourdness but also because they are extremely pertinent at this time for the Committee on Disarmament. On the fairly safe assumption that we shall not in fact arrive in a reasonably short time at an agreement on both types of weapons, it is essential to adopt some other intermediate provision to overcome the virtual deadlock. The form of that measure might be the issue by all States of declarations similar to that of the United States Government. More specifically, States could renounce at once

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by unilateral declarations the use in war and the manufacture of biological weapons; and could also undertake to eliminate existing stockpiles while waiting for -- I repeat, while waiting for -- the renunciation to become contractual when the desired overall agreement is reached. Thus we should eliminate the immediate danger without having to separate two questions which, as we stated earlier, should remain united.

34. Moreover, in the next few months a propitious opportunity will occur for making such declarations in a collective act of the utmost political significance. They could be made by the Heads of State for the forthcoming celebration, this October, of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

35. In conclusion, I believe that our Committee could draw up a model unilateral declaration like that which we have in mind.

36. Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translation from Russian): First, I should like to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Committee for welcoming me here as head of the delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic. I am deeply touched by their consideration and shall try to respond in kind by co-operating with them in achieving agreement on the important questions under discussion in the Committee. Before starting my statement, I too should like to welcome the new head of the Bulgarian delegation, Ambassador Petrov; the new head of the Japanese delegation, Ambassador Tanaka; and my distinguished neighbour, the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Castañeda.

37. In this first statement of mine in the Committee on Disarmament, my main purpose is to deal with the revised draft treaty prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof (CCD/269/Rev.2). In our view the adoption of a treaty on denuclearization of the sea-bed as a partial disarmament measure will have an importance equal to what has been achieved in such other international agreements as the outer-space treaty (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI)); the Moscow treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests in three environments (ENDC/100/Rev.1); and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (ENDC/226*), which entered into force in March. As we all know, these important international instruments are a positive contribution to the cause of peace and security: they facilitate the taking of other opportune measures of nuclear disarmament likely to provide a good impetus towards the attainment of our ultimate goal -- general and complete disarmament.

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38. Bearing in mind the convincing spirit that pervades the preamble to the draft sea-bed treaty, the Mongolian delegation would like to state that this document, whose main objective is the prohibition of the use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes, is bound to constitute an important step towards general and complete disarmament, and to contribute to the lessening of international tension and the strengthening of confidence between States.

39. During the discussion of the draft treaty some speakers have clearly interpreted it in the sense that for the nuclear Powers its provisions have a real and strictly practical application; while for the other group of countries -- the overwhelming majority having no nuclear weapons -- the value of this draft is rather theoretical and the prohibition of the emplacement on the sea-bed and ocean floor of nuclear weapons alone is for the non-nuclear majority meaningless. My delegation believes that those who hold this interpretation have arrived at their conclusions in all sincerity and under the influence of the nature and scope of the prohibitions embodied in the draft treaty in its present form. However, in the view of my delegation, an approach to the problem under discussion -- and to other important disarmament problems -- which is based on a deliberate political division of States into nuclear and non-nuclear categories will in no way contribute to the achievement of constructive agreement on the immediate problems of maintaining international peace and security.

40. As we see it, solution of the problem of the denuclearization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor will be good for all States without exception. It is our deep conviction that in solving the problem of the demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor it is necessary to start from the common interest of all States and peoples in ensuring peace and security, lessening international tension and improving friendly relations between States. At the very beginning the noble idea of prohibiting the use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes was based on the assumption that it was to be comprehensive and might be treated as a priority partial measure of disarmament. The complete demilitarization of the sea-bed would fully accord with our common interests and avoid half-measures; or, to put it plainly, this partial measure would not contain what might be called a sub-partial measure. In spite of that, the solution today -- not tomorrow -- of the problem of the denuclearization of the sea-bed would be of very positive significance.

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41. Guided by the underlying principle and the spirit of existing international instruments, the majority of delegations in the Committee has favoured inclusion in the operative part of the draft treaty of a provision committing the States parties to continue negotiations in a spirit of goodwill on further steps to exclude the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof from the arms race. We have never ceased to believe that attainment of agreement on the complete demilitarization of the sea-bed should remain one of the basic tasks of our Committee. We therefore strongly sympathize with the efforts in that direction being exerted by other countries, in particular Sweden and Poland.

42. My delegation is convinced that in any case the basic provisions of the treaty will fully serve to make the obligation of States parties not to emplace nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor or in the subsoil thereof one of the most important norms of international law. In that connexion the Mongolian delegation completely supports the proposal of the Polish delegation urging the Committee to keep on its agenda the question of the demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor (CCD/PV.471, para. 9).

43. I do not intend to go into the history of the problem before us, but wish only to give my views on some of its other aspects. My delegation welcomes the concrete language introduced in paragraph 1 of article I of the revised draft treaty which now prohibits the military use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof beyond the outer limit of a sea-bed zone coincident with the outer limit of the zone referred to in Part II of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and the contiguous Zone.1/

44. In our view the obligations assumed by States under existing international instruments relating to partial measures of nuclear disarmament, and their obligations under the principal rules of international law, must not be mutually exclusive but must, on the contrary, be mutually complementary, interacting and consistent.

45. As members of the Committee know, my delegation, speaking on 5 March (CCD/PV.455, para. 18), asked for clarification concerning one aspect of paragraph 2 of article 1 of the draft treaty. My delegation wondered whether the provision in that paragraph was fully in harmony with article I of the partial test-ban Treaty, which prohibits nuclear-weapon tests inter alia under water, including territorial

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1/ United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 516, pp. 205 et seq.

(Mr. Erdembilog, Mongolia)

waters and the high seas. We believe that the new article VIII in the revised draft treaty answers our question. It reads:

"The provisions of this Treaty shall in no way affect the obligations assumed by States Parties to the Treaty under international instruments establishing zones free from nuclear weapons."

I should like to emphasize that in putting its question to the Committee the Mongolian delegation was guided primarily by its attachment to the idea of complete demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and by the sincere desire of the whole of mankind to live in peace and work in a clean natural environment.

46. In conclusion, I should like to say a few words on verification. We realize that supervision of the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States parties under international agreements relating to partial measures of disarmament is an important component of these agreements. The adoption of any effective system of control in this field must have strict regard for the inalienable sovereign rights and security interests of States as established and recognized by international law. We believe that the supervision problem in the field of demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor is essentially a problem of ensuring the implementation by States of their undertaking not to emplace nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor, which make up the greater part of our planet. I would point out that, thanks to the efforts of the co-authors, who carefully took into account in preparing their second revision the principal observations and proposals of a number of members of the Committee, article III of the draft treaty has been sufficiently developed and is now a more detailed and quite generally acceptable text on verification.

47. Concerning the proposal of some delegations to include in the article on supervision a provision concerning international procedures and the good offices of the United Nations Secretary-General, my delegation holds the view that in carrying out this verification there is no need to resort to the establishment of a special international control body. Effective supervision can be fully achieved both on the basis of the right of each State party to keep under observation the activities of other States parties to the treaty on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof and on the basis of the right of States to undertake verification either by their own means or with the assistance of any other State party to the treaty, or by consultation and co-operation between the parties concerned.

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48. In this connexion I fully share the view of the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Roshchin, who stated at our meeting on 7 July:

> "A solution to the problem raised by delegations proposing the inclusion in article III of a provision on international procedures and the good offices of the Secretary-General is in fact provided by the right accorded to States in the sea-bed treaty to refer questions concerning the observance of the treaty to the Security Council, which may take action in accordance with the United Nations Charter, and also by the right of verification which may be undertaken by a Party using its own means or with the full or partial assistance of any other State party to the treaty." (CCD/PV.476, para. 67)

My delegation is concerned that discussion in the Committee on the problem of supervision, marked by more and more amendments and observations, should not become a stumbling-block to our joint efforts to complete the drafting of a sea-bed treaty.

49. My delegation is happy to associate itself with those delegations which have congratulated the co-Chairmen of our Committee on their constructive work. The collective efforts of the members of the Committee have been aimed at making the basic provisions of the draft more concrete, at making them generally acceptable in compliance with resolution 2602 F (XXIV) of the United Nations General Assembly. In our opinion the document now reflects in one way or another the comments and suggestions made by various delegations during the debate both here in the Committee and in the General Assembly. My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Soviet delegation and to the delegations of the other socialist countries for their position of principle and their fruitful efforts to secure speedy agreement on the draft treaty.

50. In this connexion my delegation would like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to a new initiative of the Government of the German Democratic Republic, which again clearly reflects the truly peace-loving policy of the sovereign socialist State of the German nation. I have in mind the recent declaration of the Government of the German Democratic Republic on questions of disarmament which was addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, and copies of which were circulated a few days ago in Geneva to all the members of the Committee on Disarmament. In particular, the statement underlines the position of the German Democratic Republic on the draft sea-bed treaty, and states:

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"Such a treaty would free two-thirds of the world's surface from the emplacement of new devices for mass destruction threatening mankind and would thus forestall a further expansion of the arms race. At the same time it would create favourable conditions for further measures to limit armaments and, more particularly, to exclude completely any use of the sea-bed and ocean floor for military purposes."

51. We are also grateful to the delegations of Sweden, Canada and Argentina -- your country, Mr. Chairman -- and to the other members of the Committee whose active participation has contributed to the elaboration of the draft treaty in its present form. The Committee now has the task of completing urgently the drafting of the treaty, whose sole over-riding objective is the prohibition of the use of the sea-bed for military purposes; and this will no doubt have a favourable influence on its peaceful use for the good of all countries and peoples.

52. Mr. IGNATIEFF (Canada): In my statement on 25 June last I outlined Canada's general position with respect to an adequate and appropriate response by this body to General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV). That resolution, it will be recalled, requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to work out --

"... a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which would provide the Conference with a guideline to chart the course of its further work and its negotiations ..." (CCD/275)

53. At our meeting on 2 July the representative of Italy, Mr. Caracciolo, reported to the Committee on certain discussions of a number of delegations which had been considering this question (CCD/PV.475, paras. 15-19). He outlined a proposed format for a section of what he envisaged might be included in the report from the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to the next session of the United Nations General Assembly in response to that resolution, in the form of certain "preliminary considerations".

54. Since then the representatives of the Netherlands, Sweden and Yugoslavia, among others, in interesting and constructive statements have put on record their reactions to the approach suggested by Mr. Caracciolo, and have identified with commendable clarity some of the issues which this Committee will face in developing any comprehensive programme as requested by the General Assembly. Today I should like to comment briefly on the suggestions put forward by the representative of Italy and to develop in somewhat more detail my preliminary explanation of the Canadian position.

(Mr. Ignatieff, Canada)

55. As I indicated on 26 February in my initial statement at this year's session (CCD/PV.453, para. 50), and as I reiterated on 25 June (CCD/PV.473, para. 11), the Canadian delegation welcomes the Assembly resolution on the Disarmament Decade and regards it primarily as an incentive to achieve systematic progress in the next ten years on effective measures of arms control and disarmament. We would hope that the discussion in this Committee on the basis of that resolution would maintain the constructive and forward-looking approach which has already been adopted by the representatives here who have addressed themselves to this subject, so that the resolution would in fact serve to promote systematic progress towards certain agreed objectives within the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. We share the view that the development of such a programme, as my Yugoslav colleague (CCD/PV.478, para. 78) and my Swedish colleague (ibid., para. 33) pointed out last week, should not degenerate into an end in itself.

56. I believe we are all agreed that in considering a comprehensive programme for the Committee we start from common ground regarding the ultimate goal of this Committee, as already established in the principles agreed upon by the co-Chairmen in 1961 (ENDC/5) -- the attainment of general and complete disarmament. That goal, in our view, represents the horizon to which all our efforts should be directed. In that way our present concentration on urgent, specific collateral measures, on which agreement among members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament lies more readily to hand, should not cause us to lose sight of the forest for the trees. I would agree with suggestions put forward that we must focus first on those measures of disarmament which are considered by governments as negotiable at this stage; but in so doing we should always be prepared to assess where any particular proposed measure fits into a pattern of progress towards our long-term objective.

57. We must also keep in mind what Mr. Eschauzier, in his recent statement on this subject, referred to as "the close relationship between disarmament on the one hand and international peace and security on the other." (CCD/PV.478, para. 7) The representatives of Sweden and Yugoslavia made a similar point: that the elimination of national armaments and armed forces must be related to other efforts to safeguard peace, especially through the United Nations. Obviously, disarmament is contingent upon political decisions taken in the light of national assessments of security interests as well as the international climate. Any programme which neglects to take that into consideration is not only unrealistic, but runs the risk of unnecessarily complicating our own task through building up exaggerated public expectations.

(Mr. Ignatieff, Canada)

58. I should like to turn now to the outline for part of this Committee's report on the issue as described by my Italian colleague on 2 July, and offer some preliminary comments by the Canadian delegation on this approach. As Mr. Caracciolo pointed out, this outline is in the nature of an introduction, leaving to the Committee as a whole the major task of putting forward the detailed proposals which would constitute a "comprehensive programme" for the work of this Committee.

59. My delegation is able to associate itself with that general approach and with many of the observations put forward by Mr. Caracciolo for the consideration of this Committee. I suggest that the outline presented to us could, with minor revisions, form a part of the introduction to or framework for the comprehensive programme which has to be worked out. We welcome it as such and are prepared on the basis of that section to consider the possible content of the remainder of the report with other Committee members, perhaps in an informal meeting of this body.

60. As to points of detail, as I mentioned in my statement on 25 June (CCD/PV.473, para. 13), we rather doubt the wisdom of trying to respond to the United Nations resolution to which I referred (resolution 2602 E (XXIV)) through a revision of matters dating back to the beginning of the previous decade. We should not attempt, for instance, in our view, to embark upon a discussion of the co-Chairmen's draft treaties of 1962 (ENDC/2/Rev.1; ENDC/30 and Add. 1-3), which might risk reopening the polemical debates of that period. Those draft treaties were really comprehensive programmes in themselves and represent the objective of our present discussions. I would suggest, therefore, that if reference is to be made to those drafts in our report to the United Nations General Assembly dealing with general and complete disarmament, that reference might be transposed to the concluding section of any report, where it would serve to underline the fact that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has not lost sight of the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament.

61. In earlier statements I also expressed the hope that this Committee would not get bogged down in a discussion of priorities. That is still my view. For instance, suggestions that the negotiation of a freeze or ceiling on armaments expenditure or actual armaments might be a precursor of progress on collateral arms measures might in fact tend to establish a priori requirements which might delay negotiations on some of the measures now under consideration. In this respect we would wish to ensure that our report made it clear that the special studies referred to in the paragraph entitled "Main Elements of the Programme", as described by Mr. Caracciolo, need not delay the formulation of a comprehensive programme for general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Ignatieff, Canada)

62. We have some minor reservations also regarding the third paragraph entitled "Phases of the Programme". In our view that section of the report must not attempt too rigidly to define and delineate "successive phases". Our preference would be for an approach which, after recalling the positive developments which have already taken place or are about to occur in this body, would go on to enumerate the specific arms-control measures which a consensus of this Committee might judge ripe to open up areas of potential progress. Time-tables and target dates, in our opinion, would not fit in with the complex and politically-sensitive nature of arms-control and disarmament negotiations. Nevertheless, "certain desirable priorities" and "interrelated measures" could be noted if agreement could be reached on these.

63. Indeed, flexibility is essential if we are to reach a consensus. It is for that reason that the Canadian delegation would expect that such a list of measures would include the sea-bed arms-control treaty, the question of the elimination of chemical and biological weapons of warfare, and the exploration of the implications of the responses which have been received to General Assembly resolution 2604 A (XXIV) (CCD/275) on the question of an international seismic data exchange, in the context, of course, of the Committee's continuing pursuit of a comprehensive test ban.

64. But progress towards halting the nuclear arms race must obviously continue to receive primary attention in any programme for the Disarmament Decade and beyond. Unfortunately the record of this Committee suggests that we have approached nuclear arms-control negotiations at a leisurely pace which appears grotesquely at odds with what is literally an issue that affects human survival. In this connexion I was particularly interested in the suggestion made by the Deputy Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia when on 14 July he proposed that the nuclear Powers might consider submitting "within a reasonable period of time -- say three years -- a detailed programme of measures in that sphere" (CCD/PV.478, para. 96). That would be in line with the commitment undertaken in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*).

65. In the attempt to identify areas in which progress might be possible, attention must be devoted also to regional arms-control measures. In this regard we have the valuable precedent set by the Treaty of Tlatelolco (ENDC/186, pp. 12-33) and the Antarctic Treaty.[1/] Several other delegations have put forward constructive proposals in this regard, and I might note particularly that advanced by the representative of

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1/ United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 402, pp. 71 et seq.

(Mr. Ignatieff, Canada)

Romania on 5 March, when he put particular stress on the importance of examining the possibilities of extending regional arms measures to other areas of the world (CCD/PV.455, para. 78). The representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, also stressed, on 14 July, the important potential available to the Committee in working towards a more peaceful environment through the negotiation of regional agreements, including what she described as "packages" made up of a variety of confidence-building, arms-limitation and disarmament measures (CCD/PV.478, para. 48).

66. In the view of my Government, the present discussions regarding mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, to which my Netherlands colleague (ibid., para. 20) and the Yugoslav Deputy Secretary of State (ibid., para. 98) drew attention, appear to offer a particularly fruitful area for possible progress on regional agreements of that kind at this time.

67. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, at the twenty-fifth anniversary commemorative ceremony held in Geneva on 6 July, emphasized the dangers of the escalating arms race as well as its rising costs. During this session several delegations have suggested that consideration might be given also to including a freeze on military budgets in any comprehensive programme for the Disarmament Decade. The Canadian delegation would agree that, given the fact that during the past twenty years global military expenditure has tripled, the time has come to give consideration to the possibility of a freeze as an essential initial arms-limitation measure which could lead to balanced reduction of armaments and armed forces.

68. In concluding, I should like to reiterate the plea made by the representative of Sweden for the speedy conclusion of our work on this task. As Mrs. Myrdal said:

> "We cannot face the other Members of that body [the United Nations General Assembly] in the autumn without a substantial result. Our rethinking of the disarmament programme should be such as to rekindle their hopes that serious efforts at reaching agreements and implementing them will be made." (ibid., para. 55)

The twenty-fifth anniversary session of the United Nations General Assembly deserves our best efforts; to offer less could only work to the detriment of this body as a negotiating organ and cast doubts on our ability to be an effective vehicle for the attainment of arms control and disarmament, which successive sessions of the United Nations General Assembly have placed highest in priority in the quest for a peaceful world.

69. The CHAIRMAN (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Does any delegation wish to speak? Since none does, I will read a notice by the co-Chairmen:

"The delegations of Argentina, Canada, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Sweden have requested that an informal meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament be held on Wednesday, 5 August, to discuss the question of chemical and biological warfare."

Does anyone wish to comment on that notice? Since there are no comments, I declare it approved and that we have decided that the informal meeting will be held at 10.30 a.m. on 5 August.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 481st plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Carlos Ortiz de Rozas, representative of Argentina.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Mexico, Mongolia and Canada.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 28 July 1970, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.